

STATEMENT OF JOHN PARSONS, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR LANDS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S.J. RES. 28, APPROVING THE LOCATION OF THE COMMEMORATIVE WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HONORING FORMER PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

February 16, 2006

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution approving the location of the commemorative work in the District of Columbia honoring former President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Department strongly supports enactment of S.J. Res. 28. The Administration transmitted a similar proposal to Congress on January 31, 2006.

This joint resolution would approve the location of a proposed memorial to Dwight D. Eisenhower in Area I of the District of Columbia and its environs. Legislation authorizing the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission to establish this memorial on Federal lands in the District of Columbia or its environs was signed into law on January 10, 2002.

The Commemorative Works Act governs the establishment of memorials. It sets forth strict requirements for locating a memorial in the central monumental core of the Capital City, which is designated as "Area I." After seeking the advice of the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission, the Secretary of the Interior determines that the subject of the memorial is of preeminent historical and lasting significance to the Nation. The Secretary must then notify Congress of the determination that the memorial should be located in Area I. The location of the

commemorative work in Area I is authorized only if the recommendation is approved by law within 150 calendar days after the Secretary's notification is received by Congress.

Dwight D. Eisenhower served with distinction in the United States Army as Supreme Allied Commander of the Army in Europe, Commander of Allied Forces landing in North Africa, the General of the Army, and as Commander of NATO forces. General Eisenhower left military service to become the 34th President of the United States in 1952. Among President Eisenhower's accomplishments were the establishment of the interstate highway system and the completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway. He also established the Federal Aeronautics Administration, and his interest in space led to the creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He established the United States Information Agency and made the Voice of America a principal component of that agency. His strong belief in education and his social and economic advantages led to the creation of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare the predecessor agency to today's Departments of Education and Health and Human Services.

Mr. Chairman, the National Capital Memorial Commission met on March 1, 2002, to consider the appropriateness of placing this memorial on a site within Area I, and unanimously endorsed this proposal to the Secretary. The Secretary has recommended authorization of a location in Area I. However, under the Commemorative Works Act, the location will be deemed authorized only if the recommendation is approved within 150 days of February 2, or by July 2, 2006. We, therefore, urge timely and favorable action on S.J. Res. 28.

That concludes my prepared testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.